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ABSTRACT

This document analyzes a study done by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC), which examined transfer rates in the VCCS. The document provides definitions for transfer rate, academic performance, and completion rate as they are used in the study. The study answers the following questions: (1) which pool of students were used in the study? (2) how soon do these students transfer after enrolling in a community college? (3) how many hours do these students complete before they transfer? (4) where do the students transfer to? (5) how well do these students do academically after they have transferred? (6) do those students continue their education until they complete their degree? (7) if so, in what programs do these students gain their degree in? Some of the key findings of the study are as follows: (1) Over 24% of students transfer; (2) 15% of this group continue on to complete their BA; (3) 70% of students transfer by their third year; (4) 85% of students that transfer attend a public college or a university; and (5) the most common degrees that were completed were in Psychology, Business Administration and Management, and Interdisciplinary Studies. (MZ)

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VCCS Transfer Project: Transfer Rates, Transfer Performance, and Baccalaureate Completion

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What is the pool of students used to examine transfer? Students beginning college studies in the VCCS and successfully completing 12 credit hours:

- 24,542 students began college studies at a community college in fall 1993.
- Over forty-five percent of these first-time students, or 11,154, earned twelve course credit hours by the end of 1996-97. This is the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC) definition and is the denominator for calculating transfer rates.
- See Table 1

What happens to this group of new students who complete nearly a half-year of college at a community college?

- Graduation Rate: More than twenty percent, 2299, earned a VCCS degree, diploma, or certificate in the 4-year period.
- Transfer Rate: Over twenty-four percent, or 2,695, enrolled at a 4-year college or university within the same four-year period, 1993-94 through 1996-97.
- BA Completion Rate: Fifteen percent, or 1,672 students in this cohort, completed a BA degree or higher within 8 years after entering higher education at a community college.
- Transfer Completion Rate: Of those students who do transfer, 62 percent completed a BA or higher.
- See Tables 1 and 2.

For those transferring, how soon did they go?

- Twenty-seven percent enrolled at a 4-year college by the second year (1994-95) and seventy percent by the third year (1995-96) after entering. Thirty percent transferred the last or fourth year (1996-97).

How many hours were completed before transferring?

- 43 percent completed 12 to 36 hours.
- 25 percent earned 37-59 hours
- 32 percent had earned 60 or more credits.
- See Table 5

For those transferring, where did they go?

- Eighty-five percent enrolled at a public college or university. More than 400 enrolled at George Mason University. As a group, George Mason, Virginia Commonwealth, Virginia Tech, Old Dominion, Radford, and James Madison Universities received over two-thirds of the students transferring.
- See Table 4

What about academic performance?

- Students eventually transferring earned a grade average of 2.84 for all first-year course work in the VCCS.
- At the transfer institution, the overall average was 2.73, nearly equaling their community college performance.
- See Tables 3 and 4.

Did those transferring complete degrees? in what programs?

- Sixty-two percent completed a BA or higher degree.
- Nearly one hundred completed Master's degrees.
- The ten most frequent degrees earned (in order):
  Psychology, Business Administration and Management, Interdisciplinary Studies, English Language and Literature, Biology, Nursing, History, Accounting, Sociology, Computer & Information Sciences.

Background and Method

Recent VCCS Transfer Data

In 2001, with the cooperation of State Council staff, the VCCS participated in an on-going study of transfer conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC). Results showed that of the students who begin their college studies in the VCCS and who continue or enroll for more hours than what incidental course takers do, i.e., students who take more than a course or two. Of this group, a large share is baccalaureate-bound, eventually transferring to a four-year institution.

Using the CSCC method, Virginia's results are comparable to that for community colleges nationally. Of all students who begin their college study in the VCCS and who complete three to four courses (12 credit hours), nearly 1 in 4 will enroll in a four-year college or university within four years of first enrolling in the VCCS. When transfer to a private institution is included, 1 in every 3.6 of these students beginning study in the VCCS will transfer to a Virginia 4-year college. For a review of this information see http://www.so.cc.va.us/vccsasr/Research/Transfer Assembly Measure.pdf .

Additional Transfer Measures

The current method in addition to the basic transfer measure[1] includes indicators of how students perform before and after transferring and whether or not the baccalaureate degree is completed. Again, working with State Council staff and using the same CSCC definitions of transfer student, four-year information was obtained for course performance in the transfer year and completion of the baccalaureate degree.

Definitions

Transfer Rate: The Center's definition is: "all students entering the two-year college in a given year who have no prior college experience and who complete at least 12 college credit units within four years, divided into the number of that group who take one or more classes at a public, in-state university or college within four years."

Academic Performance: VCCS course performance is limited to the first academic year, 1993-94, fall and spring semesters, for those entering students who eventually earned twelve hours in four years. Transfer performance is based on courses taken in only the first year, the transfer year, at the four-year college/university. The first transfer year could be any year within the 1993-94 to 1996-97 period.

Completion rate: Of those who transfer, this is the percentage of those who earn the BA or a higher degree. The minimum completion period is five years. For, those entering the transfer institution in 1996-97 the degree must be obtained by 2000-01 (five years) to count as completed. About 70 percent of the transfers had transferred by the third year (1995-96) of the 4-year defining period. As a result the completion period is 6 years for most (70 percent) and actually 7 years for 30 percent of the transfers who did so by 1994-95.

[1] For this project, transfer to both public and private institutions is counted. The CSCC national rate is limited to public colleges and universities.

Table1
Beginning Students in Fall 1993: VCCS Completion, Transfer, and BA Completion Rates

	(A) Students Entering in Fall 1993	(B) Who earned 12 credit hours in 4 years. N and pct Col A	Who earned 12 credit hours and completed a VCCS award within 4 years N and pct Col B	Who earned 12 credit hours and transferred within 4 yrs N and pct Col B	Who earned 12 hours, transferred within 4 years, and completed a BA or higher degree in 8 yrs. N and pct of Col. B	Who earned 12 credits, a VCCS award, transferred within 4 years, and completed a BA or higher degree in 8 years N and pct of Col. B
BRCC	562	246 43.8	67 27.2	68 27.6	50 20.3	21 8.5
CVCC	681	242 35.5	29 12.0	81 33.5	49 20.2	5 2.1
DSLCC	384	168 43.8	62 36.9	46 27.4	29 17.3	11 6.5
DCC	966	381 39.4	120 31.5	97 25.5	64 16.8	15 3.9
ESCC	226	95 42.0	37 38.9	7 7.4	4 4.2	2 2.1
GCC	627	278 44.3	64 23.0	90 32.4	53 19.1	24 8.6
JSRCC	1711	737 43.1	122 16.6	186 25.2	105 14.2	27 3.7
JTCC	1011	351 34.7	58 16.5	62 17.7	34 9.7	11 3.1
LFCC	673	339 50.4	112 33.0	92 27.1	67 19.8	47 13.9
MECC	654	389 59.5	91 23.4	66 17.0	38 9.8	9 2.3
NRCC	621	293 47.0	80 27.3	67 22.9	43 14.7	11 3.8
NVCC	5581	2815 50.4	377 13.4	696 24.7	419 14.9	118 4.2
PHCC	459	233 50.8	65 27.9	71 30.5	47 20.2	22 9.42
PDCCC	449	194 43.2	35 18.0	65 33.5	42 21.7	1 0.5
PVCC	726	228 31.4	47 20.6	68 29.8	43 18.9	16 7.0
RCC	409	174 42.5	62 35.6	43 24.7	28 16.1	16 9.2
SVCC	1187	589 49.6	126 21.4	175 29.7	109 18.5	21 3.6
SWCC	875	447 51.1	136 30.4	67 15.0	38 8.5	26 5.8
TNCC	1389	621 44.7	114 18.4	111 17.9	53 8.5	16 2.6
TCC	3130	1313 41.9	212 16.1	282 21.5	178 13.6	67 5.1
VHCC	456	275 60.3	81 29.5	43 15.6	29 10.5	14 5.1
VWCC	1189	524 44.1	126 24.0	156 29.8	118 22.5	44 8.4
WCC	576	222 38.5	76 34.2	56 25.2	32 14.4	6 2.7
VCCS	24542	11154 45.4	2299 20.6	2695 24.2	1673 15.0	550 4.9

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Table 2

VCCS Students Who Transfer: Completion Rates Within the VCCS and at the Transfer Institution

	A Transfers: earned 12 credit hours and transferred within 4 years	Transfers who completed a VCCS award in 4 years N and pct of Col. A	Transfers who completed a BA or higher degree in 8 years N and pct of Col. A	Transfers who earned a VCCS award within 4 years and completed a BA or higher degree in 8 years N and pct of Col.A
BRCC	68	27 39.7	50 73.5	21 30.4
CVCC	81	13 16.0	49 60.5	5 6.2
DSLCC	46	17 37.0	29 63.0	11 23.9
DCC	97	27 27.8	64 66.0	15 15.5
ESCC	7	4 57.1	4 57.1	2 28.6
GCC	90	32 35.6	53 58.9	24 26.7
JSRCC	186	40 21.5	105 56.5	27 14.5
JTCC	62	15 24.2	34 54.8	11 17.7
LFCC	92	56 60.9	67 72.8	47 51.1
MECC	66	17 25.8	38 57.6	9 13.6
NRCC	67	20 29.9	43 64.2	11 16.4
NVCC	696	182 26.1	419 60.2	118 17.0
PHCC	71	28 39.4	47 66.2	22 31.0
PDCCC	65	6 9.2	42 64.6	1 1.5
PVCC	68	23 33.8	43 63.2	16 23.5
RCC	43	20 46.5	28 65.1	16 37.2
SVCC	126	32 18.3	109 62.3	21 12.0
SWCC	67	38 56.7	38 56.7	26 38.8
TNCC	111	27 24.3	53 47.7	16 14.4
TCC	282	85 30.1	178 63.1	67 23.8
VHCC	43	18 41.9	29 67.4	14 32.6
VWCC	156	53 34.0	118 75.6	44 28.2
WCC	56	10 17.9	32 57.1	6 10.7
VCCS	2695	790 29.3	1672 62.0	550 20.4

Table 3

VCCS Students Who Transfer: Numbers Transferring and Academic Performance Within the VCCS and at the Transfer Institution --by Community College

	A Transfers: earned 12 credit hours and transferred within 4 years	For Transfers (Col.A): Average VCCS GPA for the first year of course work	For Transfers (Col. A): Average transfer institution GPA for the first year of course work
BRCC	68	2.92	2.73
CVCC	81	2.91	2.72
DSLCC	46	2.83	2.62
DCC	97	2.90	2.67
ESCC	7	2.84	2.48
GCC	90	2.88	2.56
JSRCC	186	2.79	2.48
JTCC	62	2.40	2.59
LFCC	92	3.07	2.75
MECC	66	2.83	2.68
NRCC	67	2.82	2.79
NVCC	696	2.78	2.73
PHCC	71	2.84	2.68
PDCCC	65	2.80	2.57
PVCC	68	3.00	2.71
RCC	43	2.99	2.62
SVCC	126	3.11	2.85
SWCC	67	3.11	2.81
TNCC	111	2.68	2.77
TCC	282	2.80	2.88
VHCC	43	2.99	2.69
VWCC	156	2.75	2.91
WCC	56	2.56	2.82
VCCS	2695	2.84	2.73

Table 4
VCCS Students Who Transfer: Numbers Transferring and Academic Performance within the VCCS and at the Transfer Institution-- by Transfer Institution

Transfer Institution	Number of Transfers	Percent of Total	VCCS Grade Average	4-year Grade Average
George Mason University	425	15.74	2.77	2.74
Virginia Commonwealth Univ	331	12.26	2.66	2.66
Virginia Polytechnic Inst	324	12.00	3.09	2.64
Old Dominion University	310	11.48	2.78	2.65
Radford University	279	10.33	2.67	2.68
James Madison University	151	5.59	3.09	2.83
Longwood College	97	3.59	2.96	2.82
University of Virginia	91	3.37	3.46	2.87
Christopher Newport Univ	80	2.96	2.59	2.75
Clinch Valley College	63	2.33	2.65	2.74
Mary Washington College	59	2.19	3.35	2.65
Norfolk State University	45	1.67	2.53	2.97
CHRV College of Health Scienc	30	1.11	2.27	2.91
Coll of William and Mary	28	1.04	3.63	2.61
Averett College	27	1.00	3.01	2.84
Shenandoah University	25	0.93	2.84	-
Emory and Henry College	23	0.85	2.85	2.77
Roanoke College	22	0.81	2.79	-
Liberty University	21	0.78	2.41	2.67
Lynchburg College	21	0.78	2.88	-
Ferrum College	20	0.74	2.73	-
Marymount University	20	0.74	2.44	2.71
Bluefield College	17	0.63	3.10	3.11
Virginia Wesleyan College	15	0.56	2.81	2.97
Bridgewater College	13	0.48	3.03	-
Virginia Military Inst	13	0.48	2.44	2.29
ECPI-Richmond	12	0.44	1.81	3.44
ECPI-Va. Beach	12	0.44	2.16	3.50
Virginia State University	12	0.44	1.97	2.58
Hampton University	11	0.41	2.91	-
Mary Baldwin College	11	0.41	2.81	-
Hampden-Sydney College	10	0.37	3.26	-
Richard Bland College	8	0.30	2.87	2.92
Randolph-Macon College	8	0.30	3.25	2.88
Saint Paul's College	8	0.30	2.35	2.69
Virginia Union University	8	0.30	2.41	2.73
University of Richmond	7	0.26	3.44	3.07
Hollins College	6	0.22	3.00	-
Randolph-Macon Woman's Colleg	6	0.22	3.23	-
Virginia Intermont College	6	0.22	2.74	3.16
ECPI Computer Inst - Roanoke	6	0.22	2.10	3.50
Eastern Mennonite College & S	5	0.19	2.78	-
National Business College	4	0.15	2.31	3.20
Other	10	0.37	-	-
Total	2700		2.84	2.73

Table 5

VCCS Students Who Transfer: Numbers Transferring and Credits Completed prior to Transferring --by Community College

	Transfers: earned 12 credit hours and transferred within 4 years	Number and percent earning 12-36 hours	Number and percent arning 37-59 hours	Number and percent earning 60 + hours
BRCC	68	23__34	18__26	27__40
CVCC	81	54__67	17__21	10__12
DSLCC	46	22__48	11__24	13__28
DCC	97	53__55	19__20	25__26
ESCC	7	2__29	1__14	4__57
GCC	90	41__46	19__21	30__33
JSRCC	186	88__47	48__26	50__27
JTCC	62	34__55	13__21	15__24
LFCC	92	24__26	23__25	45__49
MECC	66	26__39	21__32	19__29
NRCC	67	34__51	18__27	15__22
NVCC	696	237__34	224__32	235__34
PHCC	71	18__25	21__30	32__45
PDCCC	65	50__77	9__14	6__9
PVCC	68	25__37	19__28	24__35
RCC	43	18__42	5__12	20__46
SVCC	126	133__76	15__9	27__15
SWCC	67	16__24	8__12	43__64
TNCC	111	54__49	29__26	28__25
TCC	282	94__33	92__33	96__34
VHCC	43	14__33	8__18	21__49
VWCC	156	65__42	30__19	61__39
WCC	56	30__54	15__27	11__19
VCCS	2695	1155__43	683__25	857__32

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